

Testimony in support of HB-6355

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, ranking members Kissel and Fishbein and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Richard Boritz, I am from Southbury and a supporter of CT Against Gun Violence. Before living in Southbury, I resided in Sandy Hook and lived there at the time of the Sandy Hook School shooting. That tragedy still influences me to this day. One lasting effect has been to make me more aware of the need to protect people from gun violence. That is what motivates me to ask that you favorably report HB-6355 out of committee so that the General Assembly can vote to strengthen our Extreme Risk Protection law. It will close loopholes that will make it more effective in preventing firearm suicide and homicide.

While the ERPO law is most effective at preventing suicide and violence against family members, it has also been shown to prevent mass shootings. I know of two cases, both in 2019, when individuals who made credible threats of mass shootings had to turn in their firearms. These are only two of the hundreds of cases in which a Duke University study concluded that Connecticut's ERPO law prevented dozens of suicides and many homicides. That study estimated that "for every 10 to 20 risk warrants issued, one life was saved by averting a suicide."

Please continue to do your part in keeping Connecticut a beacon for the rest of the country and vote to improve the effectiveness of our ERPO law by closing loopholes.

Thanks you for all you do.

Richard Boritz
Southbury, CT